Propaganda Art from the 20th to the 21st Century

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CHAPTER III: CONTEMPORARY PROPAGANDA

The notion of the contemporary indicates what happens in our *present*, carrying within it the obvious paradox that defining a present turns it instantly into history – in fact into a different history. Art historian Sven Lütticken considers the contemporary rather as something of an arena or theater, as he writes that "the contemporary should be seen as a contested terrain, as asynchronic coexistence of different contemporalities, ideologies, and social realities."[1] In this context, Lütticken speaks of the contemporary as "history in motion."[2]

As we will explore throughout this chapter, in our present century, the conflicts between different claims on history and, consequently, its impact on our present and future, have become increasingly prominent. The western project of the War on Terror has been enacted through military and technological means by declaring a "clash of civilizations"[3] – a war that stages an opposition between Western, 21st-century "democratic progress" and Muslim fundamentalist "sealed time."[4] We can also think of the claim of the Islamic State, whose self-declared global caliphate proposes itself as a new Ummah for Sunni factions all over the world, modeled after the year 1 of its prophet.[5] Or we can think of the warnings of environmentalists and activists like Naomi Klein, who refer to our geological age as the anthropocene – part of a timeframe that extends far beyond past and future date-keeping, in which human technology has irreversibly altered the ecology and geology of the planet – forcing us to face a future in which there might not be any history left.[6] It is this conflictual theater of the contemporary – this theater

1 Sven Lütticken, *History in Motion: Time in the Age of the Moving Image (Berlin: Sternberg Press, 2013), p. 25.*

2 Ibid.

3 The words of Samuel Huntington, who developed the notion of the clash of civilizations in the years preceding the War on Terror, would become paradigmatic in the global warfare of the 21st century: "Law and order is the first prerequisite of Civilization and in much of the world — Africa, Latin America, the former Soviet Union, South Asia, the Middle East — it appears to be evaporating, while also under serious assault in China, Japan, and the West. On a worldwide basis Civilization seems in many respects to be yielding to barbarism, generating the image of an unprecedented phenomenon, a global Dark Ages, possibly descending on humanity." Samuel Huntington, The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of the World Order (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1996), p. 321.

4 The concept of sealed time is borrowed from Lütticken, with which he aims to describe the caricature made of Islamic civilization supposedly counter-posed to progress. See: Sven Lütticken, Icons of the Market: Modern Iconoclasm and the Fundamentalist Spectacle (Berlin: Sternberg Press, 2009), p. 65.

5 In the words of Abū Bakr al-Baghdādī, leader of the Islamic State: "O Muslims in all places, rejoice, take heart, and hold your heads high! For today you have, by God's bounty, a state and caliphate that will renew your dignity and strength, that will recover your rights and your sovereignty: a state joining in brotherhood non-Arab and Arab, white and black, easterner and westerner; a caliphate joining together the Caucasian, Indian, and Chinese, the Syrian, Iraqi, Yemeni, Egyptian, and North African, the American, Frenchman, German, and Australian." Quoted from Cole Bunzel, "From Paper State to Caliphate: The Ideology of the Islamic State," The Brookings Project on U.S. Relations with the Islamic World, Analysis Paper No. 19 (Mar. 2015): p. 41.

6 In the words of Naomi Klein: "Fundamentally, the task is to articulate not just an alternative set of policy proposals but an alternative worldview to rival the one at the heart of the ecological crisis – embedded in interdependence rather than hyper-individualism, reciprocity rather than dominance, and cooperation rather than hierarchy. This is required not only to create a political context to dramatically lower emissions, but also to help us cope with the disasters we can no longer to avoid. Because in the hot and stormy future we have already made inevitable through

where a variety of histories find itself in motion and the "contemporary" manifests itself through radically different conceptions of time – that we will analyze in this chapter through the prism of contemporary propaganda.

In the previous two chapters, we have been able to define some key terms in our analysis of propaganda. We have defined propaganda as a performance of power, and in the context of different modernisms – from Western capitalist modernity to Soviet revolutionary modernity – we concluded that as structures of power differ, so do propagandas. We have sometimes referred to the material dimension of these structures of power as "infrastructures."[7] In Totalitarian Propaganda Art and Modernist Propaganda Art, we have seen how the macro-performative dimension of these infrastructures relates to the aim of constructing reality according to the interests of its proprietors, which is sustained by the micro-performative dimension of propaganda in which the performance of power acts *through* the bodies of society at large. Our examples were the Stalinist regime and the United States in the Cold War, which are relevant case studies as both operate as "vertical" structures of power, but in very different ways.

In the case of the Stalinist regime, we witnessed a near "sovereign" macro-performative dimension of power in which art, through the paradigm of socialist realism, was employed to represent and shape reality after the interest of a singular ruler. The micro-performative dimension is embodied by those who labor for socialist realism to come into being. Whether artist, factory worker or farmer, each were to embody a reality they themselves were simultaneously tasked to create. In the case of the United States, which aimed to uphold democracy in the face of the Soviet Union, such overt centralized direction of art was unthinkable. Similar to the earlier model of democratic propaganda that we discussed in relation to the British Wellington House, a covert propaganda in the form of the CIA-backed Congress of Cultural Freedom was needed to counteract the Soviet Union on the cultural frontlines, without scrutinizing the idea of democracy as a model free of propaganda. This macro-performative dimension of propaganda, subsequently was to direct the micro-performative dimension in the form of the abstract expressionists "enacting" their liberation of figuration: the grand variety of cultural workers proclaiming their artistic freedom at the many iterations of the Congress for Cultural Freedom, and the public at large, which was to internalize the absolute cultural distinction between the symbols of freedom (liberated abstraction), and oppression (indoctrinated figuration).

It is important to emphasize that although both examples follow a vertical structure of power, the models are still very different. The existence of democracy in the context of the United States, however compromised or contradictory, defines a different relative freedom of its citizens, but also shapes a different propaganda. Whereas the Stalinist regime has little need to separate propaganda from governance, the legitimacy of the United States was dependent on maintaining an absolute separation between democracy and propaganda, although actually, it was in need of both. We already mentioned that the notions of the vertical and horizontal are far from absolute, but moreover, one can dissect a variety of propaganda models both within vertical and horizontal structures of power.

In the case of Avant-Garde Propaganda Art, we have seen how the revolution initially aimed at redefining the performance of power that is propaganda, by turning the macro-performative dimension of propaganda into collective action of which the micro-performative dimension is a direct continuation, with the aim of equalizing the relation between sender and receiver. The macro-performative dimension in this case is defined by a collective demand for the seizure and re-distribution of power. The micro-performative dimension is defined by the self-governance of the Soviets, that were to secure the redistribution of power on a day to day basis. Avant-Garde Propaganda Art is the result of this horizontal model of power. The shape and form of constructivist and productivist art is shaped by the macro-performative dimension of the revolution, but simultaneously provides tools for the furthering of its micro-performance in the form of its propaganda kiosks and workers clubs, that turns workers in both senders *and* receivers of propaganda.

In this chapter, we will further elaborate on these different workings of propaganda through two models. The first is the rebooted propaganda model of Chomsky and Herman that focusses on the performance of monopolies of power in which the distance between sender and receiver is maintained and strengthened. The second is an inverted propaganda model, which focusses on emerging powers with an egalitarian objective in length of the early stages of the Russian Revolution, that aim at unifying sender and receiver.

our past emissions, an unshakable belief in the equal rights of all people and a capacity for deep compassion will be the only things standing between civilization and barbarism." Naomi Klein, This Changes Everything: Capitalism vs The Climate (Canada: Penguin Random House, 2014), p. 399.

7 Nato Thompson in this regard speaks of "infrastructure of resonance," which he explains as "the set of material conditions that produces a form of meaning. It is, to put it as directly as possible, the collection of structures (newspapers, social networks, academic institutions, churches, etc.) that shape our understanding of any given phenomenon – including ourselves. Anything that circulates is thus a part of an infrastructure of resonance." In Thompson's definition of power, the infrastructure of resonance is key: "If we want to change meaning in the world, we simply need to diagram an infrastructure, visit it, and radically alter it." Nato Thompson, *Seeing Power: Art and Activism in the 21st Century (Brooklyn/London: Melville House, 2015), pp. 60, 61.*

What defines the scale and acceleration of the Technological Society in the 21st century and, as we will trace in the beginning of this chapter, also the scale and acceleration of contemporary propaganda is the so-called "War on Terror."[8] The War on Terror is a war declared by the first George W. Bush administration, when on September 11, 2001, nineteen hijackers operating under the name of the organization Al-Qa'ida (*The Base*), managed to gain control over four commercial airplanes crashing them into four different sites. As the United States war effort increased in its aftermath, the September 11 attacks were increasingly framed as an attack on the Western world itself; an attack on the "values" of capitalist democracy, not only on individual freedom, but also consumer freedom.[9] The War on Terror persuaded many Western nations, including the United Kingdom, and my own country, the Netherlands, into a "Coalition of the Willing."[10] These wars defied international law – not in the least the United Nations Charter – in a variety of ways.[11] The two Barack Obama administrations that succeeded Bush's felt obliged to continue the efforts of the War on Terror in Iraq and Syria to stop the rise of the Islamic State – itself the product of the Iraq War[12] – now in the form of the more soberly titled "Anti-ISIS Coalition," strategically including additional Middle-Eastern allies, such as Saudi Arabia, Qatar, Jordan, and Turkey, in order to diminish the neocolonial appearance of the war effort.[13] This attempt to create the general guise of a broad multi-national coalition beyond

8 President George W. Bush read his State of the Union on September 21, stating: "Our war on terror begins with al Qaeda, but it does not end there. It will not end until every terrorist group of global reach has been found, stopped and defeated." "Text of George Bush's Speech," *The Guardian*, Sep. 21, 2011, https://www.theguardian.com/world/2001/sep/21/september11.usa13.

9 This was expressed most famously by Bush, when calling upon the responsibility of the American people to support the war effort by keeping the economy going, stating: "I encourage you all to go shopping more." "President Bush's News Conference," *New York Times, Dec. 20, 2006, http://www.nytimes.com/2006/12/20/washington/20text-bush.html?_r=0.*

10 Operation Iraqi Freedom was not supported by the United Nations, leaving the administration of President George W. Bush to assemble its own coalition. Although it would eventually involve about sixty nations, some of these countries supplied little more than nominal assistance, the majority of the war effort being financed by the United States and the United Kingdom. For a governmental perspective on the members of the Coalition of the Willing and their contributions to the invasion see: Stephen A. Carney, Allied Participation in Operation Iraqi Freedom (Washington, DC: Center of Military History United States Army, 2011).

11 In 2004, then United Nations secretary general Kofi Annan, declared Operation Iraqi Freedom "illegal" based on the UN founding charter. Although the first article of the charter states the right "to take effective collective measures for the prevention and removal of threats to the peace, and for the suppression of acts of aggression or other breaches of the peace," Annan argued that the claim of the United States and United Kingdom for the legitimacy of the invasion as a form of "pre-emptive self-defense" would lead to a breakdown of the international order. See: Ewen MacAskill and Julian Borger, "Iraq War Was Illegal and Breached UN Charter, Says Annan," The Guardian, Sep. 16, 2004, https://www.theguardian.com/world/2004/sep/16/iraq.iraq.

12 Journalist Patrick Cockburn, reconstructing the emergence of the Islamic State, writes in this regard: "It was the US, Europe, and their regional allies in Turkey, Saudi Arabia, Qatar, Kuwait, and United Arab Emirates that created the conditions for the rise of ISIS. They kept the war going in Syria, though it was obvious from 2012 that Assad would not fall." Patrick Cockburn, *The Rise of the Islamic State: ISIS and the New Sunni Revolution (London/New York: Verso, 2015), p. 9.*

13 See: Kathleen J. McInnis, "Coalition Contributions to Countering the Islamic State," *Congressional Research Service*, Apr. 13, 2016, https://www.fas.org/sgp/crs/natsec/R44135.pdf.

the East–West divide was already questionable, but its fragile constellation is now under severe threat from the Trump administration due to its propagation of a "Muslim ban" to the United States in the form of Executive Order 13780, targeting countries such as Iran, Libya, Somalia, Sudan, Syria, and Yemen.[14]

Despite Obama administration's attempt to stage a new spirit of transnational cooperation, the neocolonial War on Terror has relentlessly continued to reintroduce a false divide between the "free" West and the "barbaric" East, allowing profoundly racist rhetorics to define both domestic and foreign policy in Western states – a divide that is further deepened and exploited by the Trump administration. The War on Terror, designed as a never-ending war, further established completely new para-legal realities, in which civil rights became suspended through ongoing declarations of states of exception, allowing the unprecedented surveillance and detention of civilians, while legalizing torture and extralegal killings through assassinations and drone warfare. The passing of the "Patriot Act" by the Obama administration, which will inevitably be continued if not worsened by the Trump administration – was a legislative foundation for increased surveillance and the trespassing of civil privacy, thus becoming a piece of legislation that was mainly successful in annulling others.[15]

Contemporary propaganda has been essential in the aim of constructing this particular reality in the 21st century. But we should add that contemporary propaganda has been equally important to the millions of people that rose to the streets opposing the war effort, protesting against far more fundamental existential crises in the domains of economy and climate change. This holds even more for the millions of people murdered in the ongoing war, those declared stateless – if they were not so already – and their families, friends and communities. Those opposing the war effort within Western societies, and those against whom the war effort is directed – also attempt to engage their own models of contemporary propaganda, which as we will see, are different from the propaganda models of the War on Terror.

In the first section of this chapter, we will – as mentioned – begin to revisit Chomsky and Herman's propaganda model. We will not only attempt to update and revise their propaganda model, but also propose an "inverted propaganda model," aimed at recognizing forms of power

14 "Protecting the Nation from Foreign Terrorist Entry into the United States" was signed as Executive Order 13780 on March 6, 2017. Retrieved from the website of the White House, https://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2017/03/06/executive-order-protecting-nation-foreign-terrorist-entry-united-states

15 The Patriot Act passed on Oct. 26, 2001, as H.R. 3162 with the aim to "To deter and punish terrorist acts in the United States and around the world, to enhance law enforcement investigatory tools, and for other purposes." Retrieved from the website of the United States Congress, https://www.congress.gov/107/plaws/publ56/PLAW-107publ56.pdf.

and propaganda largely ignored by the original model. Through the work of Joseph Masco, Judith Butler, and Mohamedou Ould Slahi, we will identify in the next three sections three main actors that have emerged on the global stage of the contemporary, strongly shaped by the War on Terror. These three actors mark the ideological divides and political contradictions in our 21st century and can be analyzed through an update of the original propaganda model on the one hand, and our proposition of an inverted propaganda model on the other.

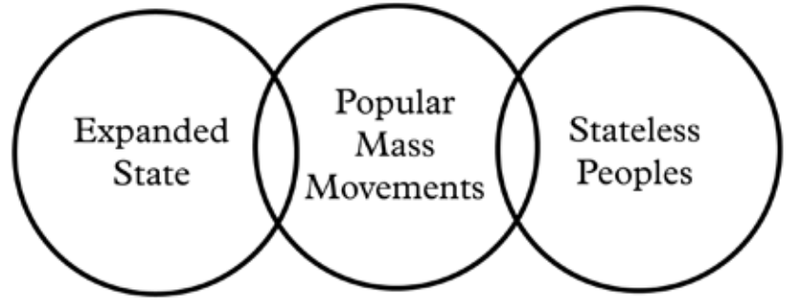
The first of these three actors is what we will discuss as the *expanded state,* which emerged as the foundational power structure of the War on Terror, whose war efforts, some argue, should themselves be considered as a form of state terror.[16] With regard to the expanded state we speak here of the government-driven military-industrial complex and the private economies it includes, which have shaped the massive infrastructures of the War on Terror.[17] The second actor consists of *popular mass movements,* large mobilizations of politicized civil society – although not necessarily majorities – which organized themselves in various protests against both the War on Terror and the social inequalities and ecological destruction. As artist Dave Beech argues, we should consider such manifestations of the popular will neither as purely a "radical and subversive version of the people," nor as "the people as the collective addressee of the state," but rather think of them dialectically, as a new, emergent collectivity that we will discuss as a people-in-the-making.[18] Beech considers the notion of the people not as an entity that appears at once, due to a revolutionary insurgency in the name of the people or of a designation as a "people" by a state. In his reading, the very notion of the people, is a transformative category in the continuous process of becoming. The third actor are *stateless peoples*, which consist of refugees and undocumented migrants fleeing the wars and social instability created by the War on Terror, stateless children born in refugee camps, whistleblowers whose nationality has been

16 The history of colonialism, imperialism, and contemporary intervention is theorized in a series of conversations between novelist and philosopher Andre Vitchek and Noam Chomsky in an attempt to establish a historical genealogy to posit the notion of "western terrorism," i.e., state – or in our case, "expanded state" – terrorism. See: Noam Chomsky and Andre Vitchek, *On Western Terrorism: From Hiroshima to Drone Warfare (New York: Pluto Press, 2013)*.

17 Throughout this chapter we will note different concepts used to describe the infrastructures of the War on Terror, such as "black world" and "secret geography." Another popular term has been that of the "deep state," borrowed from Turkish analysts. The deep state is described by Peter Dale Scott as assignments "handed off by an established agency to organized groups outside the law." Nafeez Mosaddeq Ahmed describes such practices as "a novel but under-theorized conception of the modern liberal state as a complex dialectical structure composed of a public democratic face which could however be routinely subverted by an unaccountable security structure." Although properly theorized in some domains, it is also a term popular in conspiracy theories, which brings us to maintain the more formal description of the expanded state. See Peter Dale Scott, *American War Machine: Deep Politics, the CIA Global Drug Connection, and the Road to Afghanistan* (Lanham, Maryland: Roman & Littlefield, 2010), p. 2, and Nafeez Mosaddeq Ahmed, "Capitalism, Covert Action, and State-Terrorism: Toward a Political Economy of the Dual State," in *The Dual State: Parapolitics, Carl Schmitt and the National Security Complex*, ed. Eric Wilson (London: Ashgate, 2012), p. 53.

18 See: Dave Beech, "Modes of Assembly: Art, the People and the State," in Maria Hlavajova and Simon Sheikh (eds.), *Former West: Art and the Contemporary after 1989* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2017), p. 563.

taken away and supposed terrorist suspects imprisoned in high security complexes and secret prisons or "black sites" around the world, as well as blacklisted groups designated as "terrorist organizations." Stateless peoples, in a variety of forms and through different ideological motives, resist – out of conviction or by necessity – the War on Terror.



So how do the expanded state, popular mass movements, and stateless peoples relate to one another in the contemporary global theater of the War on Terror? While the expanded state argues that its war efforts are waged in defense of democracy and its civil society, popular mass movements reject this claim, as embodied in the famous anti-war slogan "Not in our name." In other words, the expanded state and popular mass movements stand in an antagonistic relationship. Nonetheless, popular mass movements that consist of actors of civil society, still have a certain access to certain rights and protections that the expanded state allows for, although these are relative to the kind of citizen in question: white Americans that oppose the war, for example, will generally be able to claim more protection from the expanded state than people of color, even when the latter formally hold the same kind of citizenship.[19] In the case of stateless peoples, these rights and protections are non-existent altogether. While undocumented migrants and

19 A report of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) describes how so-called "stop-and-frisk" policies enacted by law enforcement radically increased in the aftermath of 9/11, as the attacks seemingly legitimized the profiling of Arab peoples, peoples of color in general, as well as LGBTQI+ communities: "In the post 9/11 era, as it became publicly acceptable to racially profile certain communities again, profiling impacted policing in all communities and efforts to promote community policing and improve relations between communities of color and police were greatly scaled back." See: "Born Suspect: Stop-and-Frisk Abuses & the Continued Fight to End Racial Profiling in America," *NAACP, Sep. 2014, p. 5, http://action.naacp.org/page/-/Criminal%20Justice/Born_Suspect_Report_final_web.pdf.*

refugees can be deported immediately, with few laws protecting them, subjects considered potential terrorists face indefinite detention, even torture, if not imminent destruction – a condition elaborated by philosopher Giorgio Agamben as a form of "bare life."[20]

Considering that stateless people are considered non-citizens, or even non-human entities in the case of so-called terrorists, the procedures of deportation, indefinite detention, or destruction, can be applied by the expanded state with hardly any repercussions at all. Nevertheless, while there is no overlap between the expanded state and stateless peoples – they exist in complete opposition – there is an overlap between popular mass movements and stateless peoples; between the ones in whose name the War on Terror is waged and that stand in an antagonistic relation to it, and the ones against whom the War on Terror is waged. Both are faced with a condition of precarity, although in highly different degrees. But in both cases their precarious lives can be related back to the expanded state: an opposing force that potentially allows overlaps or alliances between the different categories of politicized civil society and stateless peoples. As we will see below, much is at stake in the overlap between the latter two categories, when it comes to the challenge of opposing and overcoming the War on Terror and its capacity to construct reality in the 21st century. We will note here that stateless peoples can of course organize themselves in the form of popular mass movements as well, or join popular mass movements organized by civil society. But we will be using the designation of popular mass movements here predominantly to discuss the role of civil society actors, those who might oppose the regime of a given state, but through their citizenship still hold a status of relative privilege or protection within it.

These three actors – the expanded state, popular mass movements, and stateless peoples – form three different subjectivities through which we can understand the oppositions that define the contemporary global theater of the War on Terror, and from which we will be able to distill three different concepts of contemporary propaganda: three different propagandas.

Different from the first chapter, which covered the development of propaganda from the First World War to the end of the Cold War, in which we attempted to provide an overview of both historical and contemporary propaganda studies, our present chapter will be more succinct, just like the period with which we will work: from the declaration of the War on Terror in the early 21st century until our present day. While there are many propaganda studies that deal with the past century, there are few that deal with our present one. As a result, we will be working with what some readers might consider an unconventional selection of sources: Masco's *Theater of Operations*, Butler's *Towards a Performative Theory of Assembly* and *Precarious Life*, and Ould Slahi's *Guantánamo Diary*, which we will closely read in the next sections. We have selected these for two reasons. First, since each gives a profound – if not embodied – testimony of the meaning of propaganda in the context of the three actors that we just identified. Second, because they strongly resonate with the domain of *art* – not a narrow understanding of art, but an expanded theory of art that will prove crucial as a basis for our next chapter *Contemporary Propaganda Art*. We are dealing here with analysis of the *imaginative* dimensions of the War on Terror (Masco), the *performative* stagings in political mass movements (Butler), and the desperate *cultural* output of a stateless prisoner of war (Ould Slahi). This selection here is not simply defined by the already existing body of propaganda studies we discussed earlier. It rather follows the interest of a *practicing propaganda artist*: namely me, the writer of this thesis.

We will now begin by updating Chomsky and Herman's propaganda model of and propose our own elaboration in the form of an inverted propaganda model to deepen our understanding of the process in which the three actors we have just introduced have defined the meaning and practice of propaganda in our 21st century.

20 Agamben relates the notion of bare life to the Roman concept of the *homo sacer, a figure without rights, who, throughout history, has been essential to constituting the rights of others – for example, in the reduction of Jewish peoples by Nazism to bare life, to affirm the absolute rights of the supposed Aryan race: "Bare life remains included in politics in the form of the exception, that is, as something that is included solely through an exclusion." See: Giorgio Agamben, Homo Sacer: Sovereign Power and Bare Life (California: Stanford University Press, 1998), p. 13.*

3.1 CONTEMPORARY PROPAGANDA

As we may recall, Chomsky and Herman's propaganda model from 1988 is defined through five "filters" that "manufacture consent," i.e., operate as a kind of interface for the performance of power. These five conditions can be summarized as *ownership*, *advertising*, *source control*, *flak* (distortion), and *anti-communism*. Written just before the fall of the Berlin Wall and predating the massive rise of new communication media in the digital realm – how much of these five filters that define modern propaganda retain their validity in our 21st century? Or, in other words, can we gain a first understanding of contemporary propaganda by revisiting the Chomsky–Herman propaganda model, from the perspective of both the expanded state, and its opposition in the form of popular mass movements and stateless peoples? In his article "The Propaganda Model: A Retrospective" (2000), Herman counters decades of critique that accused him and Chomsky of leftist bias and conspiracy theory and re-affirms the formal criteria of their model of quantified data analysis:

> The model does describe a system in which the media serve the elite, but by complex processes incorporated into the model that involve mechanisms and policies whereby the powerful protect their interests naturally and without overt conspiracy. This would seem one of the model's merits; it shows a dynamic and self-protecting system in operation.[21]

He continues to argue that "the communications industries and politics over the past dozen years have tended on balance to enhance the applicability of the propaganda model"[22], and ends with a challenge: "We are still waiting for our critics to provide a better model."[23] While that model is yet to emerge, communication researcher Brian Michael Goss did endeavor to systematically revisit the five filters of the propaganda model in his *Rebooting the Herman & Chomsky Propaganda Model in the 21st Century* (2013). According to Goss, the normative reality that is created by dominant monopolies of power through propaganda, follows the contemporary doctrine of neoliberalism, which he – in accordance with anthropologist and geographer David Harvey – defines as a political project of mass privatization of public infrastructures (from schools to hospitals and transport) while simultaneously emplo-

21 Edward S. Herman, "The Propaganda Model: A Retrospective," *Journalism Studies, Vol. 1, No. 1, (2000): pp. 101–12, at p. 108.*
22 Ibid.
23 Ibid., p. 111.

ying state subsidies to provide tax cuts for corporation and companies and securing elite interests through a massive security apparatus, one that excessively targets disenfranchised classes, peoples of color, and the poor.[24] This neoliberal doctrine characterizes the type of ownership that regulates mass media nowadays. While Goss observes that, different from the period of Chomsky and Herman's writing, the cult of the media mogul is now slowly but steadily disappearing, it has been replaced by the "financial interests of the investment class"[25] who gain "about 75 percent of revenue from ad accounts" while "about 65 percent of newsprint space"[26] is devoted to them. Considering the fact that ad buyers wish to publish their commercials for a target audience with financial capacity to purchase the commodities and services they advertize, this inevitably influences both the stories being published and the audience addressed. The poor are not a consumer class, so why publish for them?

The expansion of news in the form of digital media is significant, although, according to Goss, this has not fundamentally altered the monopolization of news through ownership. A printed medium continues to produce twenty times more revenue than a digital one[27] and "[s]eventeen of the 25 most visited online news sites are organs of incumbent news firms."[28] These are simultaneously the sources that are also most cited, copied, and linked through non-mainstream digital platforms and which consequently leave the pre-Internet "news ecology" intact.[29] Goss' analysis risks to disregard the massive impact of formerly fringe platforms such as *Breitbart News* – home of the so-called "alternative-right," or "alt-right" in short – in the election of Donald Trump, as documented recently by writer Angela Nagle[30]; although one could make a case that while Trump both during his campaign and his presidency actively cites and borrows from fringe digital platforms of conspiracy theories, it is partly through Trump's own monopoly of the media and the vast power exerting through his own business empire, that marginal materials from the so-called "deep web," enter into the mainstream.[31] Although the Internet has been capable of generating counter-narratives, often by producing information later on validated by mainstream media, Goss argues that this is not the same as altering the increased monopolization of the media. Rather, he suggests, the Internet should be considered as an important site of potential "disturbance" of the existing media order, with figures such as activist-journalist Glenn Greenwald in its vanguard. Greenwald in that regard is a perfect example, as he gained notoriety through his work with former National Security Agency (NSA) operator Edward Snowden, who leaked a series of documents to Greenwald offering insight into the extent of surveillance on the civil population, media, and the political class, both foreign and domestic. Greenwald would seem to agree with Goss that while alternative digital media already form a crucial site of disturbance, they have not yet been able to fundamentally alter the monopolies on information that they have made visible, thus leaving the dominant filter of ownership as proposed by Chomsky and Herman intact in the context of contemporary propaganda.[32]

Nonetheless, we find here a potentially weak spot in Chomsky and Herman's propaganda model. For while the five filters effectively define the construction of reality through propaganda from the perspective of dominant monopolies of power, a second interpretation of the propaganda model might be elementary to understand emerging structures of power in the form of digital activism in practices such as those of Greenwald, as well as much broader popular mass movements that have manifested themselves in the past 15-odd years. For the emerging structures of power, the possibilities of new digital media are amongst the most important entry points to impact a broader public domain.[33] This fact does not necessarily contest a propaganda model that focuses on majority ownership, but at least indicates the need for a *second pro-*

24 Brian Michael Goss, *Rebooting the Herman & Chomsky Propaganda Model in the Twenty-First Century* (New York: Peter Lang Publishing, 2013), pp. 20–23. Echoing the work of Chomsky and Herman, Harvey speaks of the effort of the War on Terror as one to "manufacture consent," this in regard to the neoliberal economy that made the war possible and from which the war would benefit at the same time. See Chapter 2, "The Construction of Consent," in David Harvey, *A Brief History of Neoliberalism* (Oxford/New Work: Oxford University Press, 2005), pp. 39–63.

25 Goss, *Rebooting the Herman & Chomsky Propaganda Model in the Twenty-First, p. 36.*

26 Ibid., p. 43.

27 Ibid., p. 54.

28 Ibid., p. 56.

29 Ibid.

30 Angela Nagle, *Kill All Normies: Online Culture Wars from 4Chan and Tumblr to Trump and the Alt-Right (Winchester/Washington: Zero Books, 2017).*

31 Most notorious is the case of conspiracy theorist and host of the online tv-channel *InfoWars Alex Jones, who thrives on claims that the attacks of September 11 were an "inside job," and states that vaccines are part of a masterplan for increased government control. Not only has InfoWars massively increased its audience since the rise of Trump, there are legitimate claims that Jones operates as an informal consultant to the American president. Jim Rutenberg, "In Trump's Volleys, Echoes of Alex Jones's Conspiracy Theories," The New York Times, Feb. 19, 2017, https://www.nytimes.com/2017/02/19/business/media/alex-jones-conspiracy-theories-donald-trump.html.*

32 Greenwald in this regard specifically discusses the failure of media to effectively apply checks and balances to the government due to its various tied interests and mutual dependency, thus connecting the danger of data monopolization by the state with information monopolization of the media: "The theory of a 'fourth estate' is to ensure government transparency and provide a check on overreach, of which the secret surveillance of entire populations is surely among the most radical examples. But that check is only effective if journalists act adversarially to those who wield political power. Instead, the US media has frequently abdicated this role, being subservient to the government's interests, even amplifying, rather than scrutinizing, its messages and carrying out its dirty work." See: Glenn Greenwald, *No Place to Hide: Edward Snowden, the NSA and the Surveillance State* (London: Penguin Books, 2014), p. 179.

33 This is at stake in the work of documentary film maker Neville Bolt, who attempted to re-actualize the anarchist concept of the "Propaganda of the Deed" with regard to the creation of violent images, "advertised" by insurgents across the digital realm, with the aim of mobilizing resistance against- or even overthrow of the state: "Recognizing that politics is played out in the global mediaspace, revolutionaries now use the weight of the media against the media. It is thus a form of political marketing […] thereby positioning it in terms of wider societal gain." See: Neville Bolt, *The Violent Image: Insurgent Propaganda and the New Revolutionaries (London: Hurst & Company, 2012), p. 257.*

paganda model that takes emerging powers as a starting point. We will elaborate upon this further below.

Continuing his analysis of Chomsky and Herman's propaganda model, Goss argues that the propaganda filter of ownership is directly interrelated with that of source dependency. The pressure on news production, further amplified by digital readership, makes journalists increasingly dependent on official government sources. The powerful public relations apparatus of the government, in the spirit of Bernays often outsourced to private agencies, further allows for a broad presence of secondary official representatives to produce flak (distortion) aimed at undermining opposition voices, ranging from the recruitment of retired army personnel acting as "independent" experts on talk shows to positively affirm the successes of the War on Terror in Iraq,[34] to pseudo-scientific think-tanks that produce seemingly academic papers and data contesting the existence of climate change, followed by campaigns to discredit the work of independent researchers who argue that climate change is very real indeed.[35] Essentially, Goss's assessment of the first four filters of Chomsky and Herman's propaganda model – ownership, advertising, source control, and flak – is that while profound modifications in the landscape of Technological Society may have occurred – the media mogul transforming into the investor class, the realm of print enlarging into that of the digital – these changes have rather amplified and expanded the reach and capacity of Chomsky and Herman's propaganda model than altered the basic conditions of the contemporary performance of power. One point of difference stands out prominently though, and that is Chomsky and Herman's conditions of "anti-communism as a control mechanism." Regarding this point, Goss does not merely expand the propaganda model into the present, but re-contextualizes it both historically and in its contemporary manifestation. Goss argues that, unlike in the Cold War, the fifth filter of the propaganda model in the context of the War on Terror, is transformed into the broader conception of the "Us/Them" dichotomy, re-introduced by the George W. Bush administration.[36] We may remind ourselves in this context of the first State of the Union address after the attacks of September 11, in which Bush declared:

34 Goss, *Rebooting the Herman & Chomsky Propaganda Model in the Twenty-First Century, pp. 63–65.*
35 Ibid., pp. 146–48. An interesting contribution in this regard comes from John O'Loughlin, who discusses the "new realities of academic work in an age of terrorism" in the form of post-9/11 academia that classifies its sources just like the governmental agencies enacting the War on Terror itself. More than mere falsification, this creates a realm in which an academic claim becomes sourceless as such – as true or false as the writer claims it to be. See: John O'Loughlin, "The War on Terrorism, Academic Publication Norms, and Replication," *The Professional Geographer*, Vol. 57, No. 4, (November 2005): pp. 588–91, at p. 589.
36 Goss, *Rebooting the Herman & Chomsky Propaganda Model in the Twenty-First Century, p. 97.*

> Every nation, in every region, now has a decision to make. Either you are with us, or you are with the terrorists. From this day forward, any nation that continues to harbor or support terrorism will be regarded by the United States as a hostile regime.[37]

To understand the historical, political, and ideological foundation of this dichotomy, Goss calls upon the concept of orientalism, as developed by the Palestinian-American philosopher Edward Said. In his book *Orientalism* (1987), Said identifies "[n]ineteenth-century Orientalism" as "the distillation of essential ideas about the Orient – its sensuality, its tendency to despotism, its aberrant mentality, its habits of inaccuracy, its backwardness."[38] Articulated through the work of colonial regimes, through the work of scientists, novelists, and philosophers, these characteristics were in fact turned into a powerful imperialist and racist trope, that continues to structure the perceptions of the Orient or the East up until today. In Said's words:

> My contention is that Orientalism is fundamentally a political doctrine willed over the Orient because the Orient was weaker than the West, which elided the Orient's difference with its weakness.[39]

The contemporary Us/Them dichotomy, Goss argues, is the continuation of the Occident/Orient divide. Saddam Hussein, as Goss argued, was to play the role of the backward tribal leader that maintained his innocent, uneducated peoples in a state of oppression. Removing him became the equivalent of liberating Iraq. The orientalist personalization of Hussein as Iraq was countered by the heroic media portrayal of the modern crusader in the form of George W. Bush embodying the West, completing the Us/Them dichotomy.[40] Goss comments that "[t]he paired exaltation and denigration of Our and Their leaders perhaps mutually summon each other into being": the more barbaric the portrayal of one, the more liberational that of the other.[41]

We only have to think today of the extremist language introduced by Donald Trump, or the manifold ultranationalist, if not blatantly fas-

37 "Text of George Bush's speech," *The Guardian*.
38 Edward Said, *Orientalism (London: Penguin Books, 2003), p. 205.*
39 Ibid., p. 204.
40 The question how much of the "West" was simultaneously embodied by Hussein himself – once a US ally in the Iran–Iraq War – is asked through Paul Chan's collection of the dictator's writing on democracy, in which Hussein writes: "Democratic practice should be permanently part of our policies as it constitutes a basic part of the Arab Baath Socialist Party's ideology, which considers the individual as high value but not the absolute value: for the outcome of the higher value is not the individual alone as an independent entity, but rather all the interacting central objectives at which our Party aims." See: Saddam Hussein and Paul Chan, *On Democracy (Athens/New York: Deste Foundation for Contemporary Art/Badlands Unlimited, 2012), p. 71.*
41 Ibid., p. 104.

cist, parties and regimes emerging throughout Europe, to understand how the orientalist notion of "Them" has come to include peoples of color, Muslims, refugees, as well as protesters and dissidents. What Chomsky and Herman defined as "unworthy victims" has been expanded and multiplied in the context of the 21st century via an orientalist trope.[42] It provides us with the knowledge that the War on Terror is, in a variety of ways, a neocolonial war, that reduces potentially dissident bodies – both within the sphere of the West and outside – to uncivilized and dangerous subjects.

But what about the societal opposition against the expanded state and its War on Terror? The way in which ownership, advertising, source control, and flak in their interrelation shaped the media spectrum in the period of the Iraq War was, Goss observes, at the same time effective as a radical form of societal censorship. This was not just a censorship of basic facts that could have undermined the Iraq invasion, but a censorship also of popular mass movements opposing the war that emerged throughout the United States and Europe. On February 15, 2003, the largest worldwide antiwar protest in history was organized, characterized by a major clash between the expanded state and its effort to impose a narrative that would legitimize the Iraq invasion, and the emerging power of popular mass movements that attempted to debunk this narrative. The strength of the propaganda of the War on Terror generated an effective "effacement of popular dissent" keeping the "lines of Us/Them conflict stark and largely unblurred."[43] The invasion of Iraq, marking the beginning of a War on Terror without end, proceeded as planned. A similar form of societal censorship emerged when the Trump administration attempted to propagate through its own channels and loyal media outlets the factual falsehood that the 2017 inauguration of the new president drew a larger crowd than the 2009 Obama inauguration, while simultaneously downplaying the largest domestic demonstration against a new administration that took place a day later in the form of the Women's March on Washington.[44]

Although War on Terror is extremely powerful, as we have been able to see from the changes in government and warfare in the past one and a half decade, we should not suppose that popular mass move-

42 In the Netherlands, for example, the leader of the ultranationalist *Freedom Party (PVV) Geert Wilders began to refer to street violence enacted by Dutch citizens with a migrant background as a form of "street terrorism." This conflation of what we call terrorism with regard to organized political violence enacted by non-state actors, and minor acts of violence in the form of harassment, theft, or street riots, evidently opens up the possibility of engaging aspects of the state apparatus meant to operate in crisis for permanent use in peace*time.

43 Goss, *Rebooting the Herman & Chomsky Propaganda Model in the Twenty-First Century, p. 111.*

44 This brought the *New York Times to publish factual counter-information through crowd analysis, see: Tim Wallace, Karen Yourish and Troy Griggs, "Trump's Inauguration vs. Obama's: Comparing the Crowds, Jan. 20 2017, https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2017/01/20/us/politics/trump-inauguration-crowd.html?_r=0.*

ments have no power whatsoever. In the case of the protests against the Iraq War and the incoming Trump administration, they are clearly in a minority when it comes to fully subverting the structures of power through which the propaganda of the expanded state operates, but they are a rather *massive minority*. If we move away from the context of the United States for a moment, and take a more global perspective, one could observe that during the first one and a half decades of the 21st-century, we have witnessed an enormous variety of often interconnected popular mass movements of surprising size and scale. From the manifold manifestations stretching from Tunis to Egypt and Syria known as the "Arab Spring," to the emergence of the M15/Los Indignados movement in Spain, Catalunya, and the Basque Country, the worldwide Occupy movement, the Anti-Austerity protests in Greece, the Gezi Park protests in Turkey, the Umbrella Movement in Hong Kong, Black Lives Matter, Nuit Debout in Paris, and Standing Rock, as well as assemblies in the form of collective hunger strikes in war prisons such as Guantánamo Bay, the public manifestations of the disenfranchised, the dispossed, the undocumented migrants and refugees, the LGBTQI+ movements, the university occupations by students, or even the online mobilization to massively petition against or hack into a given regime, including the work of whistleblowers and activist journalists.[45] In these manifold popular mass movements we witness emerging structures of power.

What is important is how these different movements become interrelated: communicating with one another through alternative media, building temporary and sometimes lasting infrastructures aimed at addressing issues bypassed by dominant monopolies of power: reaching from the necessity of building alternative structures of democratic governance, creating publicly owned media, platforms for free education, cooperative models of economy, collectivized healthcare, sustainable energy resources, and so on.[46] Of course, it is too general a statement

45 Sidney G. Tarrow in this regard observes how shared global crises generate different forms of popular movements shaping a field of "contentious politics," but that the kind of movements – from democratization movements to extreme conservative action groups and so-called terrorist organizations – manifest themselves in widely different and often irreconcilable ways in response to these same crises: "[D]espite globalization – societies do not respond in lock step to the same stimuli. The countries surveyed above responded to the Wall Street crisis with different combinations of transgressive and conventional contention: As Greek anarchists torched the center of Athens, the French used the austerity crisis as a pretext to demonstrate for broader social issues, the Spanish unions struck around narrower issues, the Germans heckled their Chancellor, the American Tea Party was industriously backing rightwing candidates in the 2010 congressional elections, and the British turned away in distaste." See: Sidney G. Tarrow, *Power in Movement: Social Movements and Contentious Politics*, 3rd ed. (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2011), p. 261.

46 The chapter "Radical Internet Use" in John Downing's work on alternative media networks – including artistic intervention and cultural action – for example focuses specifically on the attempts to socialize the Internet as part of the popular mass movement, notably from the perspective of the indigenous Mexican Zapatista Army of National Liberation (EZLN), which was a key inspiration to the early 2000s alter-globalization movement in the United States. See:

to say that all of these examples have the same aims or that they necessarily stand in absolute opposition to dominant monopolies of power. The mere fact that they emerge from different precarious conditions does not make them homogenous, or necessarily democratic. The Arab Spring is one such example, which at times was appropriated by subsequent regimes. Conflicts within social movements can be rampant, and challenging an existing power does not mean that the power that would replace it is necessarily better, even when it was articulated as "democratic" or "liberational" in the process. Our aim is not to discuss propaganda in absolutist terms of "good" and "evil," but to diversify structures of power and the plurality of propagandas emerging from them. Surely what we can factually observe is that the precarious forces that assemble in popular mass movements are different from dominant monopolies of power, often because they have less actual power, recognition, and access to construct realities that would benefit their constituents. Furthermore, whether purely rhetorical or not, the claims through which these various popular mass movements emerge, tend at times to demand an oppositional kind of power. They emerge not simply with the demand to take over power as such but they challenge the very organization of power under which they are governed and regimented.

While we will discuss in further detail popular mass movements under the rubric of Popular Propaganda and Stateless Propaganda below, it is helpful to posit an alternative paradigm of propaganda to understand the difference in manifestation and possible differences in propagandas between those employed by the expanded state and those by popular mass movements and stateless peoples. As mentioned before, this demands an expansion of the Chomsky and Herman's propaganda model, which is tailored to existing monopolies of power, and not to emerging structures of power. Their propaganda model privileges scale, allowing us to identify the main proprietors that construct our current reality. But it risks at censoring out *competing realities*, referenced by both Herman and Chomsky and Ellul as smaller-scale communities and networks that introduce alternative principles of political organization, media, and overall infrastructure to make a different performance of power and a construction of a different reality possible. Rather than discussing these as mere "counter-propaganda," we need to recognize these emerging power structures as potentially different propagandas.

Tamara Villarreal Ford and Genève Gil, "Radical Internet Use," in John Downing, *Radical Media: Rebellious Communication and Social Movements* (Thousand Oaks/London/New Delhi: Sage Publications, 2001), pp. 201–34.

Chomsky-Herman's inverted Propaganda Model

Filters:		Demands:
Monopolization	>	Democratization
Corporate Advertising	>	Grassroot Mobilization
Source control	>	Public Knowledge
Flak	>	Transparency
Anti-Communism	>	Collectivity

To identify such emerging structures of power, we will add to the existing propaganda model an *inverted propaganda model*. This inverted propaganda model is not based on what Chomsky and Herman called "filters," which presuppose the control over a given structure of power, but on re-occurring *demands* that presuppose a claim made to power brought forward by mass popular movements. For example, whereas the original propaganda model includes the filter of ownership – of monopolization – a re-occurring demand within popular mass movements ranging from the Occupy movement to the Arab Spring is that of *democratization*: simply put, the demand to re-distribute power in a more egalitarian way. This again raises the question of whether a demand could actually be realized, if a movement were to control power – but we can most certainly conclude that, at least as a rhetorical demand, democratization is the opposite of monopolization. Something similar is the case for the second filter of the propaganda model, namely advertising, which in the case of popular mass movements tends to be opposed to *grassroots mobilization*: messages are not circulated through elite interest and access, as is the case with advertising, but through supposedly egalitarian constituencies that form the basis of a given movement. In opposition to the filter of source control, we see the demand for *public knowledge*, just as flak is opposed with the demand for *transparency*. Whether it is the demand of Black Lives Matter for full public recognition of the excessive and illegal killing of black people by police forces, or the whistleblowers' platforms demand for full access to the interests of monopolies of power, or the anti-austerity movement's demand for equal taxes paid by corporations as by citizens, we see how the filters of the propaganda model are countered with the demands of an inverted propaganda model that re-occur in an various popular mass movements. That is most certainly the case with the final filter of the original propaganda model, namely that of an-

ti-communism, in our current times continued as the Us/Them dichotomy: the opposite to which we will discuss in the inverted propaganda model as the demand for *collectivity*.[47]

Democratization, grass roots mobilization, public knowledge, transparency, and collectivity are thus the demands that define the inverted propaganda model that we will be engaging with to understand the nature of the alternative realities constructed through the oppositional propaganda of popular mass movements and stateless peoples.

- Let us make the following three observations regarding our first exploration of contemporary propaganda:
- The contemporary can be understood through different actors and their simultaneous claims on constructing competing realities; we have discussed three examples in the form of the expanded state, popular mass movements, and stateless peoples;
- The dominant monopoly of power of the expanded state and its War on Terror can be analyzed through an updated – or "rebooted" – version of Chomsky and Herman's propaganda model;
- The emerging power of popular mass movements and stateless peoples are to be analyzed through a different model, that we name the "inverted propaganda model"

Having assessed the value of the rebooted Chomsky and Herman's propaganda model and proposed an inverted propaganda model, we will now proceed to define the different propagandas that both dominant and emerging powers in the 21st century create. We will begin with the expanded state and its *War on Terror Propaganda*.

47 Of course, the reversed propaganda model could possibly be used for examples of popular mass movements from the past century just as well. The reversed propaganda model is thus not exclusive to the 21st century, although we have developed and employ it for that reason. In the process of using the reversed propaganda model, we are of course aware of the bias that is inherent in the use of a term such as "democratization," which might not be applicable to each and every popular mass movement, especially those critical of exactly the misuse of the democratic vocabulary for colonial and imperialist purposes.

3.2 THE EXPANDED STATE & WAR ON TERROR PROPAGANDA

In the context of the War on Terror, the scale and scope of the intersections between politics, economy, media, social life, (bio)technology, and the healthcare sector are studied and analyzed in the book of anthropologist and social scientist Joseph Masco, *The Theater of Operations* (2014).[48] According to Masco, gaining an understanding of power structures of the expanded state in the War on Terror means understanding the politics, infrastructures, and propaganda models employed during the Cold War.[49] While he discusses, like Chomsky and Herman, anti-communism as a control mechanism, his main focus is on technology and its culture, as it emerged through the invention of nuclear weapons:

> In the White House, nuclear fear was immediately understood to be not only the basis of American military power, but also a means of installing a new normative reality in the United States, one that could consolidate political power at the federal level by reaching into the internal lives of citizens. […] By focusing Americans on an imminent end of the nation-state, federal authorities mobilized the bomb to create the Cold War consensus of anticommunism, capitalism, and military expansion.[50]

The image of social destruction through a Soviet nuclear bomb is today expanded through the dangers emanating from the Us/Them dichotomy, with Them including an endless variety of terrorist dangers that have replaced the Soviet Union as sole representative of imminent destruction. Masco refers to the social effect of these images of apocalyptic destruction as a negative "social contract," a fearful enforcement of a sense of community created by the continuous message that this same community can, at any moment, be destroyed. It was a social contract thus "enabled and structured by the affective power of atomic weapons."[51] And it is exactly this negative social contract that laid the

48 The title derives from what Prussian general Carl von Clausewitz famously termed the "theater of operations" in his book *On War*, published posthumously in 1832: "The country – its physical features and population is more than just the source of all armed forces proper; it is in itself an integral element among the factors at work in war – though only that part which is the actual theater of operations or has a notable influence on it." See: Carl von Clausewitz, On War (Oxford/New York: Oxford University Press, 2007), p. 18.

49 Note that in this regard, Masco speaks of the "counterterror state," a term we will not adopt, as we will encounter several positions that claim that the War on Terror is itself a form of "state terrorism," thus making the claim of a "counterterror state" rather ineffective.

50 Joseph Masco, *The Theater of Operations* (Durham/London: Duke University Press, 2014), p. 48. The impact on the physical, psychological, political, economic, technological, ecological, and finally geographic landscapes of the Cold War are discussed in detail in Masco's *The Nuclear Borderlands: The Manhattan Project in Post-Cold War New Mexico (*Princeton/Woodstock: Princeton University Press, 2006).

51 Masco, *The Theater of Operations, p. 126.*

foundation for the political, military, technological, and cultural infrastructures through which the Cold War could be accelerated into the much more radical and global War on Terror. Masco shows how close the power stuctures of the Cold War touch upon the power structures of the War on Terror through a legislative example that concerns the political culture of secrecy, foundational for both wars:

> With the 1946 Atomic Energy Act and the 1947 National Security Act, the United States effectively removed huge areas of governmental affairs from citizen's purview. These acts formally installed a new security state in the United States, constituting a fundamental change in the nature of American democracy. The Atomic Energy Act created the first kind of information – nuclear weapons data – that did not need to be formally classified: it was "born" that way. The National Security Act then created a wide range of new governmental institutions – most prominently, the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA), the first of what would become seventeen intelligence agencies in the United States – that *by charter* would not be publicly accountable to citizens.[52]

The emergence of state information that is by definition secret, Masco argues, was not simply about "protecting technological secrets in a global competition with the Soviet Union," but equally a "means of converting American society into a countercommunist state at the level of institutions, economies, politics, and emotions."[53] The War on Terror accelerated this culture of secrecy through the introduction of a wide variety of formal directives and executive orders to control public information, by removing access in the name of national security, which resulted in about "nine million classification decisions in 2001 but over sixteen million in 2006."[54] Taking into consideration that roughly four million people in the US hold security clearances to information removed from the otherwise public domain,[55] we can realize the scale of a "secret society" in which "state power rests to an unprecedented degree on the ability of officials to manage the public–secret divide

52 Ibid., p. 124.
53 Ibid., p. 128.
54 Ibid., p. 129. A relevant comparative study pitted National Security Agency (NSA) data centers that withdraw information from the public to the domain of classified information, with the data center of the self-declared state of Sealand, the latter situated near the English coast. Sealand is not only a microstate, but also presents itself as a data safe-haven where information can be stored outside of international law, as Sealand is positioned in extraterritorial waters. Both examples are about the control over information, though both abandon the ideal of public information – of the library, material or digital – as a remnant of the past. See: Mél Hogan and Tamara Shepherd, "Information Ownership and Materiality in an Age of Big Data Surveillance," *Journal of Information Policy*, Vol. 5 (2015): pp. 6–31.
55 Masco, *The Theater of Operations, p. 125.*

through the mobilization of threat."[56]

What used to be citizens turned cold warriors, now are the citizens turned "counterterror warriors," which are demanded to lie to their environment to "protect their own classification level in everyday interactions throughout the system, and thus […] distort their social relations to protect the system of secrecy."[57] And while citizens implicated in this "secret society" are partly aware of the variety of war efforts the United States is engaged in through covert operations and drone strikes, the majority of the population is forced to live in a culture of fear created by images of an imminent destruction.[58] Average "U.S. citizens [without security clearance] have no insight into U.S. covert actions around the world" and thus "retaliatory acts appear to the American public as without context and thus irrational."[59] The hijacked airplanes of 9/11 that flew into the World Trade Center and the Pentagon, as well as other attempted assaults post-9/11, all seem to materialize out of thin air, enforcing the public image of the "irrational" and "uncivilized" nature of the terrorist, of Them, although most of the time they can be explained as acts of retaliation by their perpetrators. In an attempt to explain to the American people the historical context that brought him to sanction the attacks of September 11, Osama bin Laden stated:

> The American people are the ones who pay the taxes which fund the planes that bomb us in Afghanistan, the tanks that strike and destroy our homes in Palestine, the armies which occupy our lands in the Arabian Gulf, and the fleets which ensure the blockade of Iraq. These tax dollars are given to Israel for it to continue to attack us and penetrate our lands. So the American people are the ones who fund the attacks against us, and they are the ones who oversee the expenditure of these monies in the way they wish, through their elected candidates.[60]

Bin Laden thus calls upon U.S. society's repressed awareness of its sanctioning of "unjust wars." In the same letter, he also draws attention to other existential threats, when he writes that "[y]ou have destroyed nature with your industrial waste and gases more than any other nation

56 Ibid., p. 114.
57 Ibid., p. 136.
58 The radical capacity to imagine apocalyptic threats and the capacity to create the weaponry to actually make such apocalyptic threats a by oneself, is discussed by Masco in "The End of Ends," *Anthropological Quarterly*, Vol. 85, No. 4 (Fall 2012): pp. 1107–24.
59 Ibid., p. 134.
60 "Full Text: Bin Laden's 'Letter to America,'" *The Guardian*, Nov. 24, 2002, https://www.theguardian.com/world/2002/nov/24/theobserver. See also: Gilles Kepel and Jean-Pierre Milelli (eds.), *Al Qaeda in Its Own Words* (Cambridge/London: Harvard University Press, 2008).

in history," something that did not bring the United States to sign the Kyoto agreement.[61] While Bin Laden's narrative obviously should be challenged, Masco argues that the paradox of the culture of secrecy is that the actual threats to public safety and planetary survival such as "collapsing national infrastructure (roads, highways, levies, and dams), the devastating effects of unregulated capitalism (on jobs, housing, and pensions), or the destabilizing effects of toxic industrial substances on the environment (from polluted air and water to climate change)" remain unaddressed, or even censored from the public debate in favor of the much less existential danger of non-state terrorism.[62] Masco introduces the following example of such form of threat censorship:

> As counterterror emerged as the primary concern of the administration, government reports on climate change were edited by federal officials to downplay evidence of human contributions to global warming and to emphasize uncertainty in climate models. Research by government scientists pursuing a link between climate change and intensifying hurricanes were restricted, and the nationwide system of technical research libraries run by the EPA was closed, allegedly due to federal budget cuts – an act that drew protests from 10.000 scientists in 2006. In 2008 a survey of EPA scientists found that the majority of them had felt pressure from political appointees in the Bush administration to distort or censor environmental assessments.[63]

Even in the case of evident manifestations of violent weather, such as the 2005 Hurricane Katrina that left the city of New Orleans utterly devastated, public framing by both government officials and mainstream media was in reference to the dangers of so-called weapons of mass destruction, not climate change. If a government cannot even protect its citizens from violent weather, how could it ever protect them from (nuclear) terrorism? Here we see the immediate effect of what Masco explains as the accelerated culture of fear built on the heritage of the Cold War. While an actual threat is at our doorsteps in the form of a

61 Ibid.
62 Ibid., p. 27. As Naomi Klein argued notoriously, the use of shock and awe strategy through warfare and the projection of imminent danger, also generates opportunity to benefit from a paralyzed public to implement new political and economic structure outside of democratic control: "[T]he original disaster – the coup, the terrorist attack, the market meltdown, the war, the tsunami, the hurricane – puts the entire population into a state of collective shock. The falling bombs, the bursts of terror, the pounding winds serve to soften up whole societies much as the blaring music and blows in the torture cells soften up prisoners. Like the terrorized prisoner who gives up the names of comrades and renounces his faith, shocked societies often give up things they would otherwise fiercely protect." Naomi Klein, *The Shock Doctrine: The Rise of Disaster Capitalism* (New York: Metropolitan Books, 2007), p. 17.
63 Masco, *The Theater of Operations, p. 105.*

tropical storm, neither its causes, effects, nor future preemption are addressed. Instead, the threat is transposed to another, more politically beneficial enemy in the form of the supposed terrorist, or Them. The culture of secrecy that censors existential threats to introduce fictional ones defines the imaginative force of the War on Terror, in Masco's words, "the ability to create new realities."[64]

A final striking example in this regard is Masco's analysis of the anthrax letters sent to news media and elected officials between September 18 and October 8, 2001, in the aftermath of the September 11 attacks. While there is only a minor history of biological attacks in the United States, the George W. Bush administration decided to invest massively in the study and prevention of possible bioterrorism attacks, only to find out in 2008 – after an enormous and expensive operation – that the sender had been most probably one of their own anthrax specialists working in a government laboratory.[65] This did not stop the development of new laboratories, but rather turned health services into new front lines in the War on Terror, identifying viruses – such as SARS – as possible future terror threats. These financial boosts for industry, Masco clarifies, are also inherently tied to Cold War military-industrial practices "in which building technologies for early warning of nuclear attack also produced revolutions in computers, telecommunications, satellite systems, and electronics, all of which eventually filtered into the commercial arena."[66]

We should understand the type of warfare created by the Cold War and augmented through the War on Terror as connecting a variety of industries, military or otherwise, with their own products *as* potential terrorist weapons, replicating and imagining an endless arsenal of new dangers: from the nuclear bomb to the microbe. This fact also provides a link between Masco's analysis of the expanded state in the War on Terror and Goss's theory of contemporary propaganda, which emphasized the importance of neoliberalism in understanding Chomsky and Herman's propaganda model in the 21st century. The War on Terror is not merely a war waged by the state; it is enacted through a large set of private industries mobilized and paid by the state.[67]

64 Ibid., p. 138.
65 Ibid., p. 190.
66 Ibid., p. 160.
67 The most notorious example of the privatization of the War on Terror took the form of the "Blackwater" mercenary army founded in 1997 by former Navy SEAL officer Erik Prince, renamed "Xe Services" in 2009 and "Academi" in 2011. It gained public attention mainly due to the 2007 Nisoun Square Massacre in Baghdad, when its militia members killed 17 civilians for unclear reasons. While four militia where finally tried in 2015, the lawless character of Blackwater – contracted privately, and thus beyond regular army law – obstructed the proceedings severely. A thorough albeit polemic analysis of the political and economic dimensions of this mercenary industry is provided by journalist Jeremy Scahill, *Blackwater: The Rise of the World's Most Powerful Mercenary Army (New York: Nation Books, 2007)*.

In the radicalized propaganda model of the War on Terror, existential dangers are fully co-opted into imaginary ones, mostly against enemies that the Cold War and War on Terror have created themselves. "The War on Terror […] is unique," says Masco, "in that it is a conflict that cannot be bounded spatially or temporally, or won."[68] It is a war without limits, with the aim to "engineer a world without events."[69] It is a twisted utopia, in which the expanded notion of biosecurity created through the War on Terror "promises a world without terror via the constant production of terror," creating "a potentially endless recursive loop of threat production and response."[70] The counterterror state's "commitment to constant revolutionary change across experts, technologies, and administrative abilities," Masco claims, will have "a deep hold on the twenty-first century."[71]

Placing Masco's analysis next to Chomsky and Herman's rebooted propaganda model, we see that ownership, advertisement, source control, and flak, continue to play interrelated roles in the economy of the expanded state's War on Terror. The ownership of war is common to a public–private partnership, which enacts its advertisement through corporate media, maintains its source control through massive state-administered databases that are largely confidential, and generates the necessary flak through the continuous image of imminent (self-) destruction, which forces the public to ignore actual threats such as economic crises and climate change. This economy of the War on Terror is subsequently politically and ideologically framed through the Us/Them dichotomy (formerly the anti-communist doctrine), legitimizing new infrastructures of control, which subsequently lead to new conflicts and self-engineered dangers. We should therefore refer to the economy of the War on Terror as an actual financial economy. The endless recursive loop of threat production and response is what strengthens the ownership, the legitimacy, and the expansion of this economy. As such we need to understand the expanded state's War on Terror as simultaneously an organizational model of power *and* the propaganda for that model.

We thus conclude that War on Terror Propaganda is a contemporary propaganda defined by a performance of power that acts through the neoliberal public–private infrastructures of the expanded state. This propaganda takes the form of a recursive loop of threat production and response, to create a new reality structured on the Us/Them divide. The performativity that defines this propaganda is characterized by an existing claim to dominant monopolies of power.

68 Ibid., p. 197.
69 Ibid., p. 194.
70 Ibid., p. 156.
71 Ibid., p. 196.

What we lack at this stage of Masco's analysis is essentially the perspective of those who concretely live through the War on Terror, the bodies implicated in these emerging infrastructures of War on Terror Propaganda, whether these are the politicized millions of citizens downplayed by mainstream media when taking to the streets against the Iraq invasion, or the non-citizen captured and kept by force in the War on Terror's various black sites and extralegal prisons. We will now explore the role of politicized civil society and its resistance against War on Terror Propaganda, and analyze the conditions of a different kind of propaganda, which we will call *Popular Propaganda*.

3.3 POPULAR MASS MOVEMENTS & POPULAR PROPAGANDA

As we observed earlier, the age of the War on Terror is also the age of a growing politicized society, which organizes in the form of popular mass movements, often connecting the struggles of documented citizens to those of undocumented and stateless peoples. These popular mass movements are often related to or sparked by antiwar movements, but can also be broader in nature: demanding democratization, economic equality, and climate justice. In this section, we will analyze how the manifestation of politicized civil society in popular mass movements can be understood as a form of Popular Propaganda, and in what way Popular Propaganda aims to overcome the Us/Them divide by constructing a new "Us": a new popular collectivity. We will do so through the work of the American philosopher Judith Butler, who has given voice to a politicized civil society that opposed the War on Terror, and was a frequent participant in the popular mass movements that were fueled by antiwar convictions, as well as economic and environmental concerns. Our first focus will be her book *Towards a Theory of Performative Assembly* (2015) in which she attempts to analyze and theorize models that emerged from worldwide popular mass movements in the early 21st century, which she refers to as "performative assembly."

The first question in this regard is why certain bodies assemble in ways that become meaningful to discuss as a potential collectivity. Butler opts here for the rubric of *precarity*, arguing that this term describes a contemporary condition that is a result of the massive neoliberal privatization of common infrastructures – an inherent consequence of the expanded state, as we discussed under War on Terror Propaganda – and which "brings together women, queers, transgender people, the poor, the differently abled, and the stateless, but also religious and racial minorities."[72] Butler's claim is that, although conditions of precarity differ, the term precarity as such describes the falling away of a necessary collective infrastructure of life support, which can relate to a lack of economic security, absence of political representation, a refusal to provide safety from bodily harm, absence of healthcare or education, the breaking down of structures that protect from discrimination and prosecution, and so on. Butler argues that precarity might operate "as a site of alliance among groups of people who do not otherwise find much in common and between whom there is sometimes even

72 Judith Butler, *Notes Towards a Performative Theory of Assembly* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2015), p. 58.

suspicion and antagonism."[73] In other words, the *precariat* could be a potential class construct in which one could group a variety of peoples, beyond divisions imposed through the Us/Them dichotomy.[74]

In Butler's work, the first step in understanding the process in which the precariat articulates such a new collectivity lies in the use of the body as the foundation of the social architecture that we call "assembly." Butler here emphasizes the importance of understanding the body not as an isolated entity, but instead argues that "[w]e cannot talk about a body without knowing what supports that body, and what its relation to that support – or lack of support – might be." That means that the collective gathering of bodies in popular mass movements is an inherent act of resistance against the lack of life support that a given regime provides to these bodies. When masses of people lose their houses due to a predatory mortgage system and assemble with their tents in a park, then this is a response to a dysfunctional or completely lacking collective infrastructure. The assembly is a direct expression of this condition of precarity while simultaneously being a protest to it.

Here we touch upon the paradoxical core of what we will define as Popular Propaganda. On the one hand, the reason why popular mass movements emerge – following Butler – is due to their collective experience of precarity, a threat to their life support, which essentially means that *power has been taken away from them*. But by gathering, by assembling, an emerging power manifests itself, bringing forward demands to reclaim or redefine power itself. In this regard, Butler writes that "the performative emerges precisely as the specific power of the precarious – unauthorized by existing legal regimes, abandoned by the law itself – to demand the end of precarity."[75] This passage is crucial for our understanding of Popular Propaganda. In the original Chomsky and Herman propaganda model, we saw that the concept of performance relates to the procedure through which dominant monopolies of power are performed in society with the aim of constructing a normative reality that benefits its proprietors. What Butler argues is that in the case of Popular Propaganda, the concept of performance *is the very definition of power*. The demands of the inverted propaganda model are enacted, to make an emerging power a reality. But at that moment of performance, the enactment of the demand is the main power present;

73 Ibid., p. 27

74 Our use of the term precariat here derives from the work *The Precariat: The New Dangerous Class* (2011) by economist Guy Standing. Although Standing definesmore narrowly than as Butler, it shows substantial overlap. Standing argues the precariat is not so much "a class-for-itself, it is a class-in-the-making, increasingly able to identify what it wishes to combat and what it wants to construct." Guy Standing, *The Precariat: The New Dangerous Class* (London/New York: Bloomsbury Academic, 2011), p. 155.

75 Judith Butler and Athena Athanasiou, *Dispossession: The Performative in the Political (Cambridge/Malden: Polity Press, 2013), p. 121.*

it is a form of "bare power," sustained only through the bodies and fragile emerging infrastructures of those who assemble.[76] Different from what Le Bon considered as the barbarity of the crowd, or what Freud considers the potential of the mass to dedicate itself to a higher ideal through a leader figure, performative assembly as discussed by Butler as the emancipatory potential that emerges in the process of the gathering of bodies.

In Butler's *Precarious Life* (2004), written in the years following the attacks of September 11, she theorizes how the manifold violence of the War on Terror simultaneously provides the possibility – even the necessity – to think collectivity differently, and to connect a diversity of precarious peoples in a new kind of popular assembly. Butler's assessment of the War on Terror begins in the period of a war characterized by an amplification of patriotism and anti-intellectualism. Butler observes that even asking questions about the reasons the United States was attacked, the identity of the attackers and their motives, the prehistory of the War on Terror in terms of US military operations abroad, were equaled to a form of national betrayal, not just from the side of radical conservatives, but also from supposed progressives:

> It is not only the conservative Republicans who did not want to hear about "causes." The "just war" liberal Left made plain that it did not want to hear from "excuseniks." This coinage, rehabilitating the Cold War rhetoric about Soviet Russia, suggests that those who seek to understand how the global map arrived at this juncture through asking how, in part, the United States has contributed to the making of this map, are themselves, through the style of their inquiry, and the shape of their questions, complicitous with an assumed enemy.[77]

The global map that Butler mentions is what Masco referred to as the contemporary Theater of Operations. And the issue of "understanding" refers to the nature and constitution of the Them in the Us/

76 While an undocumented person might not be able to join a popular mass movement due to the risk of immediate deportation, civilians participating in popular mass movements – while standing in an antagonistic relation to a given regime – often still benefit from a relative, even when nearly non-existent, form of recognition. There is, in other words, still a reoccurring capacity to appear in one form or another. We thus emphasize again that we discuss the popular mass movement largely – albeit not exclusively – as a model of emerging power related to politicized civil society.

77 Butler, *Precarious Life, p. 9. Butler here refers to an article by Edward Rothstein, cultural critic of The New York Times, written in the direct aftermath of the attacks of September 11, in which he states: "One can only hope that finally, as the ramifications sinks in, as it becomes clear how close the attack came to undermining the political, military, and financial authority of the United States, the Western relativism of [postmodernism] and the obsessive focus of [postcolonialism] will be widely seen as ethically perverse. Rigidly applied, they require a form of guilty passivity in the face of ruthless and unyielding opposition." Edward Rothstein, "Attacks on U.S. Challenge Postmodern True Believers," New York Times, Sep. 22, 2001, http://www.nytimes.com/2001/09/22/arts/22CONN.html?pagewanted=all.*

Them dichotomy living at the outer edges of this global map. In the face of loss, Butler argues, we must attempt to engage a process of "hearing beyond what we are able to hear": We should not consider an attack on the West as an isolated event, but attempt to engage the loss of others elsewhere in relation to our own loss.[78] To engage in the process of "hearing beyond what we are able to hear," means to act against the persistent construction of Us, and therefore an engagement with the excluded articulated in the form of Them. It means dislocating oneself from the presupposed dichotomy central to the War on Terror.[79]

To understand how War on Terror Propaganda is capable of producing the conditions of life beyond recognition – one could say, *life beyond assembly* – Butler turns to the French philosopher Michel Foucault and his concept of "governmentality," which he considered vital to the existence of the modern state in the way political power manages and regulates populations and goods.[80] This notion of governmentality stands in contrast with the executive power invested in the figure of the singular sovereign, because contemporary democracies tend to claim the legitimacy of governmentality through the sovereignty of a given people, meaning a constituency of voters; it is through claiming the people as sovereign, that the state retains its legitimacy. But Butler observes a fundamental shift created through the politics of War on Terror, located in the capacity of the state to suspend the rule of law in cases of so-called terrorism, by bypassing international law when invading other countries, bypassing civil privacy through mass monitoring and detention of civil and foreign populations, removing information from public access, and so on. This suspension of the rule of law through the state of exception, Butler argues, allows for the "convergence of governmentality and sovereignty."[81] Butler describes this convergence as "resurrected sovereignty," a sovereignty not of "unified power under the conditions of legitimacy, the form of power that guarantees the representative status of political institutions," but sovereignty as "a lawless and prerogatory power, a 'rogue' power par excellence."[82] Resurrected sovereignty is thus a new type of neo-monarchial power articulated most clearly in the infrastructure of the "new war prison."[83]

78 Butler, *Precarious Life, p. 18.*

79 Butler implicated herself directly in such dislocation when she and several of her colleagues requested to be added to the "Campus Watch" blacklist which was part of the post-September 11 witch hunts on academics in the field of Middle-Eastern studies, initiated by historian and pro-Israel lobbyist Daniel Pipes. See: http://www.campus-watch.org/. See further: Tamar Lewin, "Web Site Fuels Debate on Campus Anti-Semitism," *New York Times*, Sep. 27, 2002, http://www.nytimes.com/2002/09/27/us/web-site-fuels-debate-on-campus-anti-semitism.html.

80 Foucault writes: "We live in the era of a 'governmentality' first discovered in the eighteenth century. This governmentalization of the state is a singularly paradoxical phenomenon, since if in fact the problems of governmentality and the techniques of government have become the only political issue, the only real space for political struggle and contestation, this is because the governmentalization of the state is at the same time what has permitted the state to survive, and it is possible to suppose that if the state is what it is today, this is so precisely thanks to this governmentality, which is at once internal and external to the state, since it is the tactics of government which make possible the continual definition and redefinition of what is within the competence of the state and what is not, the public versus the private , and so on; thus the state can only be understood in its survival and its limits on the basis of the general tactics of governmentality" See: Michel Foucault, "Governmentality," in Graham Burchell, Colin Gordon, and Peter Miller (eds.), *The Foucault Effect: Studies in Governmentality (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1991), p. 103.*

81 Butler, *Precarious Life, p. 55.*

These new war prisons – which will also be central to our next section on Stateless Propaganda – are developed in the form of extralegal "black sites," such as the Bagram Theater Internment Facility in Afghanistan – a prison of which the public initially was not even supposed to know its existence – or the Guantánamo Bay detention camp, in Guantánamo Bay, Cuba, which became a symbol of the resurrected sovereignty of the expanded state in the War on Terror. Prisoners in Guantánamo Bay await trial in special military tribunals, whose decisions can be overruled at any moment by an executive order, thus sidestepping the very meaning of a tribunal in terms of the necessary guarantee of an independent judiciary.[84] Situated at a naval base in Cuba outside of United States territory, Guantánamo Bay embodies what Butler describes as the "lawless" or "rogue" domain of resurrected sovereignty, applied through the War on Terror.[85]

To give this emerging rogue state legitimacy, the Bush administration tirelessly worked to build a sphere of symbols that mimicked the image of just authority, for example in the way in which representatives of the administration provided it legitimacy through speech acts. The government, for example, pointed out that the form of detention imposed in Guantánamo Bay – no evidence, no charges, no trial – was actually a rather common procedure, and could be found in most societies in the form of "involuntary hospitalization of mentally ill people who pose a danger to themselves and others," reasoning that "[t]he terrorists are like the mentally ill because their mind-set is unfathomable, because they are outside of reason, because they are outside of 'civilization.'"[86] Here again, we see an overlap with aspects of the Orientalist trope discussed by Goss re-emerging in the core of the War

82 Ibid., p. 56.

83 Ibid., p. 53.

84 In the words of Michael C. Dorf: "[C]laiming that Taliban, al Qaeda, and other irregular fighters in Afghanistan and elsewhere were entitled neither to the procedural protections of the criminal justice system, nor to the humanitarian protections of the Geneva Conventions, the Bush administration asserted an entitlement to hold detainees indefinitely, subject them to harsh methods of interrogation, and try them, if it chose not to simply hold them, before specially constituted military commissions. Moreover, the administration eventually claimed, the civilian courts were powerless to rule on the legality of such measures." See: Michael C. Dorf, "The Detention and Trial of Enemy Combatants: A Drama in Three Branches," *Political Science Quarterly, Vol. 122, No. 1 (Spring 2007): pp. 47–58, at p. 47.*

85 On the intersection of two contradictory legal geographies, that of Cuba and the United States, necessary to create the extralegal framework of Guantánamo Bay and its contestations, see: Derek Gregory, "The Black Flag: Guantánamo Bay and the Space of Exception," *Human Geography, Vol. 88, No. 4 (2006): pp. 405–27.*

86 Butler, *Precarious Life, p. 72.*

on Terror. This trope replaces due trial by framing the subjects concerned beyond the category of humanity proper, legitimizing the use of so-called enhanced interrogation techniques or "torture lite."[87] Just like Goss, Butler expands this trope, by showing that around the core figure of the dark savage – the "Terrorist" – an assembly of other political opponents can be added that resist full adherence to the construct of Us, such as public intellectuals, critics of the Israeli occupation, antiwar protestors, critical diplomats, LGBTQI+ communities, and even the mentally ill.

As Butler states: "[T]he notion of the world itself as a sovereign entitlement of the United States must be given up, lost, and mourned, as narcissistic and grandiose fantasies must be lost and mourned."[88] The result of such endeavor, at least initially, means that one is to leave the space of privilege invested in the notion of Us, and to assemble with the ever-expanding concept of Them: a Them that does consist not only of the supposedly "primitive" Other, but also of the incriminated public intellectual, the queer activist, the whistleblower, the mentally ill – *the precariat*. This position means *becoming Them* to create a new egalitarian definition of Us, thus dis-identifying from the core conditions that define the successful performance of power in War on Terror Propaganda. This act of dis-identification, of the loss of privilege, and the subsequent possibility of incrimination by the expanded state, must be understood as a crucial part of demanding collectivity in Popular Propaganda.

In Butler's work, we observe a call for such collectivity to arise through a new kind of assembly, an assembly not based on supposed sameness, but on shared loss and grief. It means to build a popular assembly between politicized civil society so far claimed as part of Us, and non-citizens aggressed as the constituents of Them, and thus to articulate a notion of communality that goes beyond the script imposed by War on Terror Propaganda. This procedure that joins different precarious conditions – whether in the form of politicized civil society in whose name the War on Terror is waged, or the non-citizens against whom it is waged – is what is manifested and performed, however fragile and conflictual, by the manifold popular mass movements that have arisen in parallel to the War on Terror, both in opposition to its policies, and as a living reminder of other forms of existential threats

87 In the words of Jessica Wolfendale: "The language of torture lite […] corrupts public discourse by creating the illusion that there exists a special category of torture that is professional, restrained, and far removed from the brutal practices of authoritarian and tyrannical regimes. This illusion allows us to replace the question of whether we should use torture with the question of what kinds of torture we should use." Jessica Wolfendale, "The Myth of Torture Lite," *Ethics and International Affairs vol. 23, no. 1 (2009): pp. 47–61, at pp. 58–59.*

88 Ibid., p. 40.

to our common live support.

We thus conclude that Popular Propaganda is a contemporary defined by the performance of power through the assemblies of popular mass movements – the concept of performance signifying simultaneously an expression of loss of power and a claim to power – with the aim of creating new realities based on a demand to collectivity. The performativity of this propaganda is characterized by an emerging claim to power.

We will continue now by exploring the role of stateless peoples and their relation to the War on Terror and popular mass movements, and discern the conditions of *Stateless Propaganda*.

3.4 STATELESS PEOPLES & STATELESS PROPAGANDA

Before we begin to define the notion of Stateless Propaganda, it is important to acknowledge the factual limitations of an academic exploration of statelessness from the perspective of what we could call the "stated," those who from the moment of birth, have had the privilege of being protected by their government. Being a Swiss–Dutch, white cis male who has been proposing the construction of a "we" throughout this thesis, my analysis of statelessness that I direct towards cannot but be inherently flawed, for the concrete knowledge of the world that defines statelessness can only be forcefully acquired by *being stateless*. Our proposed definition of Stateless Propaganda must thus by definition be problematized, something that we will further elaborate upon when discussing Stateless Propaganda Art in the next chapter.

As we have seen so far, there is an overlap between the categories of the expanded state and its War on Terror Propaganda and popular mass movements and their Popular Propaganda. The former lays claim on the latter for its political legitimacy, whereas the latter aims to dis-identify from the first. But there is also an overlap between Popular Propaganda and what we will now discuss as Stateless Propaganda. We already saw how Butler attempted to theorize the notion of the assembly between precarious popular mass movements and non-citizens aggressed by the War on Terror. But Butler evidently is not a stateless subject herself. Her experience of precarity is still that, of a US citizen and is relatively protected as a result. What we will now explore is a precarity of a radically different kind, namely of those who are fully excluded from the very notion of the civil, or of the human for that matter – Them – and the kind of power and assembly that they lay claim to.

On March 26, 2010, an op-ed entitled "A Terrorist Lawyer, and Proud of It" appeared in the *New York Times*. It was written by Nancy Hollander, a criminal defense lawyer who represented terrorist suspects prosecuted under the Patriot Act.[89] In her article, Hollander describes the confrontation with attitudes similar to those mentioned by Butler: "When I defended someone charged with raping a baby, no one thought I might have raped my own," she recalls, and "when I defended those accused of espionage for attempting to sell America's nuclear secrets, no one questioned my loyalty to my country," but "[n]ow that I am defending those accused of terrorism, some people as-

89 Her clients over the years varied from the non-profit Holy Land Foundation, which gathered funds for the reconstruction of war-damaged parts of Gaza and which was accused of material support to terrorist organizations with livelong sentences for its three founders as a result, to prisoners in Guantánamo Bay to whom she delivered pro bono legal support. See Hollander's lecture *Representing the Holy Land Foundation* at the New World Summit – Berlin, May 4, 2012, https://vimeo.com/64942274.

sume that I have stepped over an imaginary line and become 'soft on terrorism' or worse, that I support terrorism and am providing aid and comfort to the enemy."[90] But if that is what it takes to defend the rule of law in the face of the War on Terror Hollander concludes, then "I am a terrorist lawyer, if that means I am willing to defend those accused of terrorism."[91] Being a "terrorist lawyer" thus becomes the consequence of "defending the United States Constitution and the laws and treaties to which it is bound."[92] Hollander essentially describes the final consequence of what Butler introduced as "rogue law": the moment that defending the law becomes a crime in and of itself.[93] Hollander became part of a unique alliance with writer and editor Larry Siems and the Mauritanian Guantánamo Bay prisoner Mohamedou Ould Slahi, author of *Guantánamo Diary* (2015); a unique alliance – or an assembly – between members of politicized civil society and a de facto stateless person.

Guantánamo Diary was written by Ould Slahi during the second part of 2005 in the form of a 466-page handwritten document. At the time of writing the book, Ould Slahi was imprisoned in a segregation hut in Camp Echo, one of seven detention camps that make up the extralegal prison of Guantánamo Bay. Every single one of *Guantánamo Diary's* pages had to be put up for review to the United States government, a system that Ould Slahi's editor Siems describes as the "strict protocols of Guantánamo's sweeping censorship regime."[94] When it was finished, the document was instantly classified as secret: "every page he wrote was considered classified from the moment of its creation."[95] When finally edited and published by Siems in 2015, black rectangles of censorship littered the pages, for what had finally been released was still a censored version of Ould Slahi's original text.[96] The decision of Siems

90 Nancy Hollander, "A Terrorist Lawyer and Proud of It," *New York Times, Mar. 26, 2010, http://www.nytimes.com/2010/03/24/opinion/24iht-edhollander.html?_r=0.*

91 Ibid.

92 Ibid.

93 Chelsea Manning, a former soldier in the United States Army and client of Hollander who was sentenced to thirty-five years of imprisonment for leaking documents and videos showing, among others, war crimes committed by the United States, argued in a similar way that pursuing justice in some cases means acting against the interests of the state: "I wanted the American public to know that not everyone in Iraq and Afghanistan are targets that needed to be neutralized, but rather people who were struggling to live in the pressure cooker environment of what we call asymmetric warfare. After the release I was encouraged by the response in the media and general public, who observed the aerial weapons team video [in which innocent civilians are killed]. As I hoped, others were just as troubled – if not more troubled that me by what they saw." See: "Bradley Manning's Personal Statement to Court Martial: Full Text," *The Guardian, Mar. 1, 2013, https://www.theguardian.com/world/2013/mar/01/bradley-manning-wikileaks-statement-full-text.*

94 Larry Siems, "Introduction," in Mohamedou Ould Slahi, *Guantánamo Diary (New York: Little, Brown and Company, 2015), p. xvii.*

95 Ibid.

96 See for the full (il)legal history of Guantánamo Bay and the legal struggles against its policies, Liz Ševčenko's online database *Guantánamo Public Memory Project, that traces the exceptional juridical and political status of the war prison to 1903, when the United States was given full jurisdiction and control over the base, while the territory formally remained part of sovereign Cuban land, http://gitmomemory.org/. See also: Liz Ševčenko, "Guantánamo Bay's Other Anniversary: 110 years of a Legal Black Hole," The Guardian, Dec. 28, 2012, https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2012/dec/28/guantanamo-bay-usa.*

97 Ould Slahi, *Guantánamo Diary, p. 229.*

98 Ibid.

99 John Prados discusses the War on Terror in Afghanistan by directly tracing its key figures to the outcomes of the American involvement in the Soviet-Afghan War (1979–89) when he states that "the CIA's Afghan campaign is obviously closely related to current events. Osama bin Laden, as a rebel fighter from the CIA's secret war who is suddenly at the heart of the new terrorism, is the clearest example." See: John Prados, "Notes on the CIA's Secret War in Afghanistan," *The Journal of American History, Vol. 89, No. 2, History and September 11: A Special Issue (Sep. 2002): pp. 466–71, at p. 470.*

to include the censorship of the United States government into the printed book, rather than trying to circumvent its black rectangles, paradoxically both removes information from the eyes of the viewer, but simultaneously adds information to the document as well. It shows the institutional effort to stop us from "reading beyond what we are able to read" and as such informs us about a specific performative effort of the government. This censorship and its motive, is most telling when a black rectangle appears in the following description of a conversation between Ould Slahi and one of his guards:

> "No worry, you gonna back to your family," he said. When he said that I couldn't help breaking in[redacted]Lately, I'd become so vulnerable. What was wrong with me? Just one soothing word in this ocean of agony was enough to make me cry.[97]

In his extensive editorial footnote apparatus, Siems notes that "It seems possible, if incredible, that the U.S. government may have here redacted the word 'tears.'"[98] So it appears that in the name of national security, censorship is applied to the emotional reality of an imprisoned human being. Censorship here is applied to the evidence of the fact that Ould Slahi is a human subject capable of experiencing and expressing emotions. It is a censorship also of the affective dimension a reader might experience when reading Slahi's words.

Mohamedou Ould Slahi had left Mauritania to study and work in Germany and Canada. A crucial episode while living in Germany would turn out to be his trip to Afghanistan in 1991 to join the mujahedin – the Muslim Afghan militia – that fought what they considered the illegitimate communist government supported by the Soviet Union. At the end of his training, Ould Slahi swore loyalty to Al-Qa'ida, an organization which at that time was considered an ally of the United States government in its fight against communism.[99] During a second trip to Afghanistan in 1992, Ould Slahi witnessed the toppling of the communist government, resulting in internal power struggles of Al-Qa'ida and other resistance factions, something Ould Slahi refused to be part of, and he left the organization. But during a brief stay in Ca-

nada, his contacts with Al Qa'ida were proven to be enough reason for the authorities to link him to the so-called Millennium Plot, a series of failed Al-Qa'ida-linked attempted assaults on civil and military targets planned in the period of the 2000 millennial celebrations. In spite of the complete lack of evidence – Ould Slahi was in sporadic contact with Al-Qa'ida members, but was not working for the organization as such – he was placed under surveillance, and decides to return to Mauritania. In Ould Slahi's words: "The only thing we had done together was make a trip to Afghanistan in February 1992 to help people fighting against communism. And as far as I was concerned that was not a crime, at least in Mauritania."[100] Adding that: "For Pete's sake, the U.S. was supposedly on our side!"[101]

After reuniting with his family and living a year in Mauritania while working as a computer specialist, Ould Slahi was called in for questioning by FBI twice and held in custody. On November 28, 2001, he was flown to Jordan through the CIA's rendition program.[102] Ould Slahi writes about the moment in which he enters the limitless domain of rogue law: "November 28th is Mauritanian Independence Day; it marks the event when the Islamic Republic of Mauritania supposedly received its independence from the French colonists in 1960," after which he subsequently remarks:

> The irony is that on this very same day in 2001, the independent and sovereign Republic of Mauritania turned over one of its own citizens on a premise. To its everlasting shame, the Mauritanian government not only broke the constitution, which forbids the extradition of Mauritanian criminals to other countries, but also extradited an innocent citizen and exposed him to the random American Justice.[103]

The CIA rendition flight marked the beginning of the nearly fourteen years that Ould Slahi was forced to reside in the hands of secret police, at black sites, and in extralegal prisons – fourteen years in which he was treated as a de facto stateless person. He was to be subjected to endless interrogations based at first on Ould Slahi's supposed involvement in the Millennium Plot, but which later in the process would start to implicate him in the attacks of September 11, suggesting that

100 Ould Slahi, *Guantánamo Diary, p. 92.*
101 Ibid., p. 102.
102 Extraordinary rendition is government-orchestrated abduction and extrajudicial displacement of an individual from one country to another, used extensively by the CIA in the War on Terror to torture, interrogate and imprison suspects outside of any judicial oversight. See for a detailed analysis of extraordinary rendition in the War on Terror: Trevor Paglen and A.C. Thompson, *Torture Taxi: On the Trail of the CIA's Rendition Flights (New York: Melville House Publishing, 2006)*.
103 Ould Slahi, *Guantánamo Diary, p. 132.*

he was an active Al-Qa'ida operative, who could expose the organization's network. From Jordan, Ould Slahi was flown to Bagram Airbase in Afghanistan on July 19, 2002, and finally on August 4 that same year to Guantánamo Bay detention camp, Cuba. From the moment of his rendition on November 28, 2001 until his release on October 17, 2016, Ould Slahi would remain in custody. While severely mistreated in Amman and Bagram through beatings, intimidation, and humiliation, a full-scale torture procedure would only be implemented in Guantánamo Bay, where under direct authorization of Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld he was subjected to a "special project" consisting of months of continuous sleep deprivation, stress positions (positions in which great amount of weight is placed on just a few muscles), extreme cold, beatings, sexual abuse by guards, exposure to loud music, white noise and excessive light, permanent disorientation, sense deprivation, starvation, being subjected to staged rendition flights, being stripped from religious rights, denial of privacy, and suggestions of violent retaliation against his family members and friends, including the rape of his mother.[104]

Ould Slahi addresses the Us/Them dichotomy throughout his book. For example when he writes that "President Bush described his holy war against the so-called terrorism as a war between the civilized and barbaric world," but "his government committed more barbaric acts than the terrorists themselves."[105] These contradictions in the democratic legitimation of brutal acts of state violence reach deep into American society itself. Ould Slahi remarks that "Christian terrorist organizations such as Nazis and White Supremacists have the freedom to express themselves and recruit people openly and nobody can bother them," while "as a Muslim, if you sympathize with the political views of an Islamic organization you're in big trouble."[106] At the heart of that contradiction is the Orientalist belief that peoples of the Muslim religion, peoples of color, peoples related to the African continent or what is called the Middle-East still are to be understood as savages, something which Ould Slahi described as a "false picture" that is the result of propaganda, and which sustains the idea that Arab peoples are inherently "savage, violent, insensitive, and cold-hearted."[107] For Ould Slahi, his place in the Us/Them dichotomy is a historical re-enactment of a previous colonization, and situates his own story in the broader context of slavery:

104 See Larry Siems's online project "The Torture Report: An Investigation into Rendition, Detention and Interrogation under the Bush Administration," http://www.thetorturereport.org/.
105 Ould Slahi, *Guantánamo Diary, p. 241.*
106 Ibid., p. 261.
107 Ibid., p. 359.

> I often compared myself with a slave. Slaves were taken forcibly from Africa, and so was I. Slaves were sold a couple of times on their way to their final destination, and so was I. Slaves suddenly were assigned to somebody they didn't choose, and so was I. And when I looked at the history of slaves, I noticed that slaves sometimes ended up an integral part of the master's house.[108]

At some point, all of Ould Slahi's means of resistance within the war prison are exhausted; he gives in to the interrogations and provides whatever information is asked, true or false, to satisfy the guards and gain some form of minimal protection by winning their sympathy.[109] But even when gaining that minimal protection, becoming part of the master's house only aims to affirm the master/slavery divide. For example, Ould Slahi recounts that he is allowed to watch the movie *Black Hawk Down* (2001) with his guards. This Ridley Scott film recounts in a heroic vein the involvement of the U.S. in a United Nations peacekeeping mission in Somalia, during which two of their helicopters were shot down by Somali militias.[110] "The guards almost went crazy emotionally because they saw many Americans getting shot to death," writes Ould Slahi, "[b]ut they missed that the number of U.S. casualties is negligible compared to the Somalis who were attacked in their own homes."[111] This structural dehumanization of the Somali victims on screen and Ould Slahi off screen, however, did not stop the guards and their prisoner from "slowly but surely [becoming] a society and [starting] to gossip about the interrogators and call them names."[112] But Ould Slahi's political alliance is not to his master's house, but drawn from the "warm breath of [...] other unjustly treated individuals,"[113] those that Franz Fanon described as the community of the "Wretched

108 Ibid., p. 314.
109 On the ineffectiveness of such "confession" retrieved through torture see Philip Rumney, "Is Coercive Interrogation of Terrorist Suspects Effective? A Response to Bagaric and Clarke," *University of San Francisco Law Review* 40 (2006): pp. 479–513, at pp. 483–84
110 Released Dec. 28, 2001, the representation of United States military in Scott's film was of explicit interest to the Bush administration. Ashley Dawson describes how high-profile neoconservatives attended its preliminary screening, and how Scott explicitly voiced his patriotism in his desire to display the mission in a heroic manner. Ashley Dawson notes how the setting of the film makes the director's ideological commitment manifest when she writes "in Blackhawk Down, The Mog, as the film's Special Forces troops call the city, is a ramshackle megacity whose residents are armed to the teeth with the military detritus of the Cold War. Mogadishu is thus made to embody the new Heart of Darkness, a stateless urban world of vicious Hobbesian war of all against all. This view of Africa as the vanguard of anarchy is shared by a significant segment of the elite in the global North, who see the criminalization of the state in Africa as a direct threat to U.S. interests. It is from such feral zones, these analysts hold, that future threats to American society are likely to originate." See: Ashley Dawson, "New World Disorder: 'Black Hawk Down' and the Eclipse of U.S. Military Humanitarianism in Africa," *African Studies Review*, Vol. 54, No. 2 (September 2011): pp. 177–94, at p. 180. We will discuss similar case studies further in the final chapter in the segment *War on Terror Propaganda Art*.
111 Ould Slahi, *Guantánamo Diary, p. 320.*
112 Ibid., p. 327.
113 Ibid., p. 87.

of the Earth," which we will discuss further below. In a core reflection in his book, he interrogates the War on Terror propaganda of the Us/Them divide, only to come to a full reversal of its logic:

> Many young men and women join the U.S. forces under the misleading propaganda of the U.S. government, which makes people believe that the Armed Forces are nothing but a big Battle of Honor: if you join the Army, you are a living martyr; you're defending not only your family, your country, and American democracy but also freedom and oppressed people all around the world. [...] But the reality of the U.S. forces is a little tiny bit different. To go directly to the bottom line: the rest of the world thinks of Americans as a bunch of revengeful barbarians. That may be harsh, and I don't believe the average American is a revengeful barbarian. But the U.S. government bets its last penny on violence as the magic solution for every problem, and so the country is losing friends every day and doesn't seem to give a damn about it.[114]

In a full reversal of the Orientalist trope, it is not Them that represents the barbaric savage, but rather, the barbaric savage is the agent producing the very articulation and violent enactment of the Us/Them divide as such: the barbarian is Us. It is the "unjustly treated individuals" with whom Ould Slahi engages in collective hunger strikes in the war prison, and in whose mourning he finds solace and community.[115] And although Ould Slahi writes that "I would like to believe the majority of Americans want to see Justice done, and they are not interested in financing the detention of innocent people," and that only "a small extremist minority [...] believes that everybody in this Cuban prison is evil," his writings nonetheless clearly call for a societal responsibility toward his condition, and for the need for a collective societal self-interrogation when it comes to the acceptance of the Us/Them dichotomy produced by War on Terror Propaganda.[116]

Guantánamo Diary can be understood as a form of Stateless Propaganda that operates on two levels. First is the process of self-recognition, and therefore the recognition of the stateless as a political community. Even in the unbearable conditions of war prison, this can lead to formations of assembly and collective action, for example in

114 Ibid., p. 339.
115 Our perception of political assembly as an act of people who visibly gather in a public space limits our understanding of other, more fragmented or more complex choreographed forms of assembly, such as the case of Ould Slahi and his fellow prisoners engaging in a collective hunger strike. We will explore such alternative understanding of political assembly further in the context of *Assemblism* in the final chapter.
116 Ould Slahi, *Guantánamo Diary, p. 372.*

the form of the hunger strike. The second is the process of recognition by others, and therefore the initiation of coalitions and forms of assembly between the stateless and the stated, such as that between Ould Slahi, Siems, and Hollander, in order for society at large to acknowledge the struggles of the stateless community and its equality to the stated. *Guantánamo Diary*, as a form of Stateless Propaganda, enacts both. As a testimony, it recognizes the stateless as a political community (self-recognition), and through the alliance with Siems and Hollander and the process of making the document public, it reaches society at large (recognition by others). It is important to emphasize that this recognition is the result of self-recognition, and not the other way around. Ould Slahi sets the terms of his equality; it is not an equality that is "given" as charity, but that is the result of a political demand that he voices on behalf of the stateless community.

The stateless in this particular case are radically excluded from the existing monopolies of power of the expanded state, but they are not powerless. The power of self-recognition and of political assembly in the form of the hunger strike result from extreme forms of violence and deprivation, but the stateless recognize themselves as a political community and enact political actions and demands. The impact of *Guantánamo Diary,* which turned into an international bestseller, further proves the potential influence of the assembly between the stated and the stateless. The "power" of the stateless might be extremely precarious – to the point where one's body belongs to the war prison – but it is a power nonetheless, and one that stands in full opposition to the expanded state.

We will for now, within the given limitations of the stated, conclude that Stateless Propaganda is a contemporary propaganda defined by the performance of precarious power of a community of stateless peoples. This performance can take the form of a self-recognition of the stateless as political community on the one hand, and performative assembly between the stated and the stateless on the other. The performance of this precarious power stands in full opposition to the expanded state and demands a reversal of the Us/Them dichotomy, with the aims of constructing reality accordingly. Further examples of such forms of stateless politics and governance – from the creation of new independent states, to the initiation of stateless democracies – will be presented in the final chapter.

3.5 CONCLUSION

The contemporary in our 21st century is defined both by the increase of technological and military infrastructure and their integration into global engineering projects like those of the War on Terror, as well as by the actors that operate in opposition to these structures of power. To understand the contemporary as an arena of competing realities – as histories in motion in the words of Lütticken – we have identified three of such actors, in the form of the expanded state, popular mass movements, and stateless peoples, each of which brings about a different propaganda through a different performance of power.

In the case of War on Terror Propaganda, we are dealing with the performance of the public–private power structures of the expanded state. Through the work of Masco, we have analyzed the imaginative capacities of this by far most influential of contemporary propagandas, to the point of its ability to construct a completely new reality based on the Us/Them dichotomy. By projecting an image of imminent destruction upon its populations, War on Terror Propaganda deepens this dichotomy with the aim of turning citizens into counter-terror warriors with full-scale secret societies, comprised of citizens holding security clearances, as a result. The projection of imminent destruction operates as a form of societal censorship, by withholding archives and undermining awareness of actual existential threats such as climate change. This endless loop of threat production and response – from the nuclear bomb to the microbe – does not only shape an industry in and of itself, but also protects the interests of the proprietors of the expanded state.

In the case of Popular Propaganda, we are dealing with the performative assembly of precarious politicized civil society and its popular mass movements throughout the world. As we analyzed through the work of Butler, the emerging power of popular mass movements is defined by performativity itself: the gathering of bodies in response to the increasing threats to their life support – threats inherently tied to the neoliberal character of the expanded state – which articulates new possible alliances between different precarious constituencies. Performative assembly challenges the Us/Them dichotomy, by allying civil society on the basis of collective demands that are not represented by the expanded state. This process in which a new definition of "Us" – a new collectivity – is articulated may include undocumented or stateless peoples, thus embracing part of "Them." Through performative assembly, popular mass movements bring about new conceptions of collectivity as well as precarious infrastructures to construct reality to the benefit of its constituents.

In the case of Stateless Propaganda, we are dealing with people fully excluded from all relative privilege and protection of the expanded state. Different from politicized civil society and its popular mass movements, the power of stateless peoples in some cases does not go further than a claim on their very bodily presence, and even this – in the case of the war prison – can be denied. As we analyzed through the work of Ould Slahi, the extreme condition of statelessness nonetheless is not equivalent to powerlessness. The self-recognition of the stateless community connects peoples around the world, in opposition to and rejection of the barbarity of "Us." It can also take the form of alternative forms of assembly, such as a hunger strike or an alliance with stated individuals of politicized civil society. In the next chapter, we will discuss more far-reaching forms of stateless assembly and autonomism, which start from the condition of statelessness as a collective condition and even as a possible power in its own right.

In this chapter, we have observed how each of these three actors and their propaganda show crucial overlaps as well as oppositions. The expanded state might seek to incorporate popular mass movements to maintain its legitimacy, and popular mass movements might experience relative privilege or protection of the expanded state as a result, even though the two stand in opposition. Popular mass movements and stateless peoples might seek for possible forms of alliance and assembly, even though their experience of precarity may be extremely different. The antagonism between the expanded state and stateless peoples, is most profound and, as we will see in the next chapter, can be the foundation for stateless peoples to demand full separation and autonomy from the expanded state altogether. We also observed that the kind of power at stake in contemporary propaganda is different in nature. In the case of the expanded state we dealt with an *existing monopoly of power*, in the case of popular mass movements and stateless peoples we are dealing with *emerging power*. In the case of the stateless, this emerging power further results from a process of *self-recognition*, i.e., the alternative paradigm of power that might be inherent to the condition of statelessness as such.

Let us now, based on this chapter, propose the following definition of contemporary propaganda:

- Contemporary propaganda is the performance of power in contemporary society

Having arrived at a first understanding of contemporary propaganda in the 21st century and three conceptions of different propaganda models, let us begin to deepen our understanding of each of these propagandas, their differences and overlaps, in the domain of propaganda art.